

Duerod, Lynn M LRE

From: Anderson, Mary C LRE
Sent: Wednesday, September 05, 2001 7:35 AM
To: Tucker, Bob M LRE; Duerod, Lynn M LRE
Subject: FW: Developer abandons plans for golf course

-----Original Message-----

From: PBuckBlaster@aol.com [mailto:PBuckBlaster@aol.com]
Sent: Saturday, September 01, 2001 3:49 AM
To: kcampbel@AGRI.STATE.ID.US; Anderson, Mary C; O'Connor, Patrick S; Thompson, Lyle; theatlie@aa.smithgroup.com; Jeff_Krupka@r1.fws.gov
Subject: Developer abandons plans for golf course

Developer abandons plans for golf course

By Associated Press

GLEN ARBOR -- The owner of Homestead Resort has abandoned his 15-year quest to build a golf course near the Crystal River, a plan fiercely contested by environmentalists.

Bob Kuras said he would focus instead on building homes on the disputed property in Leelanau County.

"It's just gone on long enough," he told the Traverse City Record-Eagle for a story Friday.

Kuras first announced plans for a golf course at the resort in 1986. The project got bogged down before state and federal regulatory agencies and courts, with foes saying it would damage fragile wetlands.

A state permit was challenged all the way to the Michigan Supreme Court, which sided with the opponents but later reversed itself and upheld the permit.

Last year, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers rejected two proposals for the 18-hole course. One would have used the popular Crystal River as a water hazard, and another would have placed homes near the river.

Siding with activists and federal environmental agencies, the Corps ruled that both options would upset a series of glacial ridges and wetlands. It said one option would disturb 13.8 acres of wetlands, and the other would affect 11.5 acres.

Kuras appealed the Corps ruling. No decision has been rendered.

Kuras said he plans to construct 204 homes on the 211-acre parcel. He said he already has health department approval for 44 of them.

While some of the planned houses may be disallowed because of proximity to the river and the property's rolling terrain, Kuras said he expected most to be approved.

Chris Bzdok, attorney for Friends of the Crystal River, a citizen group that fought the golf course plan, applauded Kuras' decision.

"That was never an appropriate place for a golf course," Bzdok said.

He said he could not comment on Kuras' plans to build houses in the area without more details, such as how close the dwellings would be to the river and whether wetlands would be disturbed.